(a) whether various countries have shown interest in calling for workers from India for development of their manufacturing industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken thereon by Government?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) Indian workers are in demand abroad in various sectors including manufacturing industries. There are about 4.5 million Indian workers in the Gulf countries apart from the large number of high-skill Indian workers in the USA, Canada, Australia and the European Union.

During 2008 about 8.49 lakh workers from India took emigration clearance to leave India for employment abroad.

The policy of the Government is to facilitate orderly and legal emigration of Indian workers, discourage illegal/irregular migration and ensure the protection and welfare of emigrants. In pursuit of this policy, the Government is implementing emigration process reforms and is pursuing bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the management of migration.

India had signed Labour agreements with Jordan and Qatar in 1980s. The Ministry, after its creation in 2004, made concerted efforts to enter into bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the major receiving Countries for ensuring protection and welfare of our emigrants. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed with United Arab of Emirates (UAE) in December, 2006, with Kuwait in April, 2007, with Oman in November, 2008, with Malaysia in January, 2009, and with Bahrain on 17th June, 2009. An Additional Protocol to the existing Labour Agreement between India and Qatar was signed in November, 2007.

An MoU for forging a labour mobility partnership has been negotiated with Denmark. The Government is also pursuing labour mobility partnerships with some other countries as well as with the European Union.

The Government has signed social security agreements with France, Germany and Belgium and has concluded negotiations with the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Switzerland and Luxembourg. Negotiations are in progress with several other countries including Australia, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Hungary and Denmark. These agreements protect our workers abroad from double coverage, loss of contributions and loss of benefits in the field of social security.

Problems of Indian brides abroad

64. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the increasing incidents of exploitation, torture, demand of dowry, beating and threatening to kill or deportation to India to Indian brides by their NRI husbands and their families residing abroad;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government has received any complaints from some residents of Himachal Pradesh, in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken by Government over the said complaints and the current status of each case?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government is deeply concerned over the welfare of all Indians living abroad. It has already initiated some measures to check fraudulent marriages taking place between Indian women with NRI husbands. Family disputes, however, may be resolved through available legal means. Some of the steps taken by the Government to tackle such incidents are given in the enclosed Statement. (*See* below)

(c) and (d) A complaint from Shri Vijay Verma, resident of Himachal Pradesh seeking protection of his daughter Ms. Monika Verma who has reportedly been subjected to harassment and demand of dowry by her husband Shri Rajinder Dhunna, residing in U.K, was received in the Ministry. The complaint was referred to High Commission of India, London for appropriate action. After issue of a reminder on 19th May requesting him to contact it, Shri Dhunna has conveyed to HCI London that he has sought legal advice in the matter.

Statement

Details of steps taken by the Government of India to tackle problem of Indian brides abroad

The approach of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in addressing these issues has been to create awareness amongst prospective brides and their families on the precautions to be taken before entering into a marriage alliance with an overseas Indian and the need to familiarize themselves with the local regulations, laws and practices of the country of residence of the prospective bridegroom.

A National Consultation on "Marriages to Overseas Indians" was organized by the Ministry in February, 2006 following which the Ministry in collaboration with the National Commission for Women organized two regional workshops in Chandigarh and Trivandrum in 2006 with the objective of involving the State Commissions for women as well as the women organizations of the States concerned to spread awareness. Vividh Vikas Samithi, a Delhi based NGO in collaboration with this Ministry has conducted one day National Convention on "Indian Mission to help jilted NRI Brides" in New Delhi in April, 2009.

The Ministry organized parallel sessions during Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) conventions in which issues relating to problems of Overseas Indian marriages were discussed. NGOs, women organizations and State Government representatives besides the overseas Indian delegates attended these sessions.

The Ministry has launched a scheme in 2007 to provide legal/financial assistance to Indian women deserted by their overseas Indian spouses through Indian Missions abroad.

The Ministry has brought out information pamphlets in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Malayalam and Telugu to make Indian women aware of their rights and responsibilities and precautions that could be exercised before entering into marital alliance with overseas Indians.

The Ministry has brought out a guidance booklet on "Marriages to Overseas Indians" in English, Telugu, Hindi, and Punjabi. This booklet contains information on safeguards available to women deserted by their NRI spouses, legal remedies available, authorities that can be approached for redressal of grievances, and NGOs which can provide assistance.

The Ministry has launched the publicity cum awareness campaign through audio visual advertisement on regional T.V. network primarily to cover the States of Punjab, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

An Inter-Ministerial sub-committee was constituted in May, 2007 under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and with representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Law and Justice, National Commission for Women, National Human Rights Commission and State Governments of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh as Members to find out ways and means to assist Indian women who are deserted by their overseas Indian spouses.

Recommendations made by the sub-committee were considered at an inter-ministerial meeting chaired by Hon'ble Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs on 7th July, 2008. Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury, Minister of State for Women and Child Development also attended the meeting. The decisions taken at the meeting have been circulated to concerned Ministries, State Governments and Government agencies for appropriate action.

Attacks on PIOs and Indian students

65. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been cases of People of Indian Origin and Indian students attacked in several countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken to prevent such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) Some reports of the attack have been received. Available details are given in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix 217 Annexure No. 6]

(c) Incidents involving Indian nationals are taken up with the local authorities by our Missions/Posts abroad at appropriate level. Details of steps taken by the Government in respect of recent incidents in Australia are given in the Statement. [Refer to the Statement appended to the answer to SQ No. 15 Pt (a) to (c)]